

PAINTING
IN
WATER COLOURS

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J. M. Smith

A SERIES
Of Progressive Lessons,
INTENDED TO ELUCIDATE THE
ART OF LANDSCAPE PAINTING
IN
WATER COLOURS.

Second Edition.

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TO THE
LOVERS OF THE ART
OF
Landscape Painting in Water Colours.

THE rapid sale of the First Edition of this Work induces a presumption that it has so far been acceptable and useful. A Second Edition is accordingly submitted in a revised state, and with an encreased anxiety that it may continue to be found of real assistance to those who desire to become acquainted with The Art of Landscape Painting in Water Colours.

It is earnestly recommended that their attention be given progressively

through the following pages, as the surer means of obtaining the reward of their assiduity ; since by the perseverance therein considered as essential, the difficulties are subdued, and the simple process humbly professed to be taught, rendered more worthy their consideration.

THE AUTHOR.

Sketching.

IT is necessary to be provided with a drawing board, a T square, Indian rubber, and particularly with good black lead pencils; such as are free from grittiness, easily cut to a point without breaking, and give clear markings are the best.

Convenience requires that the paper should be fixed, the usual method is, to wet it with a sponge and water, as equally as possible : let it remain a few minutes to expand, and fasten it in the drawing board; or, the paper may be glued on the edges and so fixed on a plain board, in either case it must remain until perfectly dry. After the proportion of the drawing is determined, apply the T. square to the edge of the board, and draw the boundary lines.

In sketching, the learner is requested at all times to observe the commencement should be on the left. In the annexed outline, first sketch the distant hills, &c. Proceed next with the bridge, and the objects on a line with it, and lastly with the foreground: by so doing the hand will not obliterate any of the lines in the progress. The sketching is recommended to be done with a degree of slightness, serving only to determine the positions of the different objects, with some little attention to the forms; after which the eye should be removed a short distance, and the sketch compared with the original: the incorrectness, if any, will thus appear more evidently. Perpendicular lines are to be attended to, for from the habit of slanting the strokes in writing, the learner often imperceptibly inclines them in a similar direction. Horizontal lines are more easily preserved, being



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parallel to the base. Diagonal lines occurring in the perspective are ruled from the point of sight, they determine the heights of objects thrown obliquely to the eye in buildings, &c. A plate is annexed, showing the perspective lines of the subjects, which accompany this work, on a reduced scale; they will require the particular attention of the learner, and it is presumed an occasional reference to them will be sufficient.

Explanation of the Plate on Perspective.

- a. The base of the subject.
- b. The horizontal line, determining the height of the eye of the person supposed to be viewing the scene, and parallel to the base.
- c. The point of sight, immediately in the front of the spot on which the spectator is supposed to be placed.

Sketching seems to demand a kind of facility in execution, and though this may be the result of practice, it may not be improper to hint, that at first, great care should be taken to express the outline with all possible freedom ; for instance, a distant hill should have no sharp or unpleasing form. The offensive line here alluded to, will be apparent to the learner, if a hill be drawn in the form of a triangle, a square, &c. and it will be equally obvious that forms produced by undulating lines are more agreeable, sufficiently indicating how essential a pleasing outline is to the general effect of a Landscape.

There will not be any necessity to rub out so faint a line as is required in the first process. If a line be sketched incorrectly rather proceed above or below it, as it shall seem requisite, until the true form be produced ; this the eye will immediately seize : then it may be

drawn rather stronger, and those which have served as guides to the correct line, rubbed away with crumb of bread. Caution is recommended in the use of Indian rubber when the subject is intended to be finished in colours, for the friction produces a roughness on the surface of the paper which will defeat every attempt to obtain transparency or clearness.

After the simple outline is thus obtained, proceed to give the minutiae, such as the curving of the road, the boundary of the grass, &c. on the edge of the road, the marking of the stone work on the bridge, &c. &c. these may be put in with a firmer pencil, giving the appearance of distinctness, rather than the reality; for instance, a line or mark, which in effect is to be straight, should not be made as if

ruled from one extremity to the other, but drawn with a tremulous motion of the hand, dotting it stronger in one part than another. The lines in the shade should be more heavily marked than those in the light.

Repeated trials should be made and compared with each other, that sketch possessing the greatest freedom, may receive the ink shading. The requisite for which are, two vessels to contain water, one from which to soften the tints, preserved clean, the other, to wash the pencils in, a few small delf saucers in which to mix the tints, some swan, and, some goose quill hair pencils, which should be elastic, and form a good point while using. In the choice of Indian ink select such as will give off freely, and smoothly, on being rubbed in a saucer,



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having first dipped the end into water ; any other will defeat the endeavour to produce clearness in the drawing. The practice first with Indian ink is recommended because the process is more simple, and the effects, produced by light and shade, more readily obtained than with colours.

Shading with Indian Ink.



Make three gradations of tint, see the Margin, commence with the weak tint No. 1, laying it evenly over every part except the extreme lights ; when dry, proceed with the second degree of strength No. 2, lay it over the parts receding from the light, leaving the tint No. 1, between the white parts and the tint No. 2 ; in laying this the pencil should not be too full, but frequently replenished, so that the ink may be

spread without giving a hardness to the edges. The drawing of the respective parts must be particularly attended to. Then take the strong tint, No. 3, put in the masses, or parts requiring force, re-touching until the effect be obtained. In the foregoing process it is intended for the edge of each tint to be distinguished; if it should seem too sharp in any particular part, it may be softened with a pencil dipped in clean water. A drawing can be made with the use of one tint only; but by repeated tedious washings, a woolly or spiritless effect will be produced. Freedom and spirit are sacrificed in the endeavour to give too great a degree of finish. The same method applies to the four following subjects, which the learner is requested to practice, keeping the washes of ink as broad as the nature of the subjects will admit. Enlarging now and then a subject, four or six times



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the size, gives greater scope for boldness, and freedom of hand : also reversing the lights of the originals has its beneficial result, since it induces the mind to exert itself, and thereby prepares the way for sketching from nature.

The colours requisite are Lake, Burnt Ochre,*Indigo, Gamboge, and Sepia. Prussian-blue, and burnt terra de Sienna may be sometimes necessary; they possess a greater degree of brilliancy. For the making of tints, besides the small saucers, a delf palette is recommended, having divisions, in which the tints may be preserved without fear of their running into each other. Select a few flat pencils of different widths for Skies, or broad washes : these pencils may be

* Called by the colour preparers Light Red.

joined, having at either end one, for the convenience of turning to soften off the tint laid by the other. A Tint is made by dipping the end of the cake of colour into water and rubbing it on the palette, then reducing the colour rubbed off with water to the tone required.

Colouring with Simple Tints.

Make a tint of indigo, match it with the sky of the annexed subject. Soften the flat pencils, pressing out the superfluous water, on the edge of the vessel, mix the tint well with one of them, and with the pencil, moderately full, apply it to the angle of the sky opposite the light of the subject, pass down the end to the hill, then keeping the pencil nearly upright continue to wash towards the light from side to side, advancing not more than inch at each motion



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of the pencil, until the space be nearly covered ; then turn the pencil, and with the other nearly dry, continue the wet edge of the tint for the remainder of the space, and pass it along the edge of the tint left on the hills to prevent its shewing in a sharp line through the other tints. If the tint should not have been spread evenly, when it is dry, a sponge softened in water and passed two or three times across the drawing will restore it. It is easier perhaps to the learner to commence with a weaker tint and by repeating, to produce the effect, in which case one tint must be perfectly dry, before a second is laid, and each time it must be carried less forward than the preceding.

For broad skies ; it will facilitate the spreading of the tint, if a clean sponge, dipped in water, be passed over the paper previously, the seeming greasiness of the paper will thereby be destroyed.

When the sky is finished, with the same tint pass over the water, and grass on the foreground, then add a little indigo, and pass over the distant hills and all the bushes, taking care not to leave the colour too full on the edges, lest an offensive hardness be produced; this tint may be laid with a large goose quill pencil, and should it be necessary to replenish the pencil with colour to comple^{te} the space, be careful to take but little, for, if at the edge of the exhausted tint a full pencil be applied, the unequal distribution will cause the space to become rough, and give considerable trouble: this should be remembered whenever sufficient colour cannot, or is not taken at the first to complete the space proposed. With a tint of Ochre lay over the whole of the ground, the bridge, and the road beyond. With a tint of Gamboge pass over the bushes, and the grass on the

foreground, weaken the tint by adding a little water, pass over the shade, under the arches, part of the distance which appears under, and the continuation of it beyond the bridge; weaken it again, and pass over those parts of the bridge which are in the light, weaken it yet more till it will but just destroy the blueness of the water, wash over from the front, and soften it off at the arches. With a very weak tint of lake pass over the whole of the distance, then with a tint of sepia, pass over the shade part of the bridge, preserving the lights clean. The reflections are to partake of the colours of the objects which produce them, they are somewhat lighter, but may be done at the same time by wetting the point of the pencil, to reduce the force of the tint contained in it.

Indian ink has for some time been very properly exploded in the preparation of a Landscape for colouring, notwithstanding it is equally susceptible of force, as it is of delicacy; but it is found to give too great a degree of opacity under many circumstances, and where washing up is required, is difficult to remove without injuring the surface of the paper. These objections do not attach to the process consisting wholly of the colours as described in this work.

It would be tedious, even if it were possible, to give the effects of colours when compounded; the variety is endless; but it may be essential that a few leading particulars on this point should be mentioned.

The primitive colours are Red, Blue, and Yellow. A simple tint is produced by the colour rubbed from one cake and reduced with clean water to the tone required, it is denominated simple because mixture is not necessary to obtain it. A compound tint is the mixture of colours, as lake and indigo to produce a purple; blue and yellow to produce a green; &c. these are also called derivatives because they have no existence but by mixture.

All colours or rather tints, when used simple, are clearer, than when compounded, and they appear to greater advantage, whatever the strength, by being judiciously opposed to compound tints. Thus red in its varieties of tint may be contrasted by green in its varieties. Blue by orange, and yellow by purple in its varieties.

It will be observed that red, blue, and yellow, the primitive or simple tints, do not afford the most pleasing contrasts ; nor do the derivative, or compound tints, orange, purple, and green, as opposed to each other, hence may be deduced a direction in the choice of tints to produce the most agreeable contrasts, and, it is also worthy of notice, that such selections with respect to contrast, produce a perfect harmony every way consistent with the laws of nature, or the rules of art ; from both of which is learned, that real beauties as applied to the art of painting do not consist in a multiplicity of colours, but in the just combination of a few.

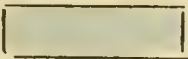
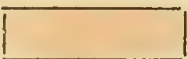

The prints which accompany these observations have been aquatinted to assist in producing the requisite force, but drawings





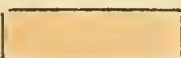

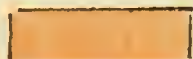
View of the ruins of the castle of St. Andrew's from the hill of the castle

from them, with respect to the outline, and coloured, or rather painted, according to the directions, will produce effects far more pleasing.

Compound Tints.

The following subjects are required to be painted with greater force than the preceding lesson on Colouring. Begin the sky with a tint of indigo,  wash about half over the sky in a diagonal direction, having the greater breadth of light at the horizon, and, while the edge of the tint is wet, soften it off, when this is dry, pass a tint of ochre  over the whole of the subject, as evenly as possible. With a tint of sepia and ochre,  mark the breakings on the foreground, repeating the tint where additional

force is required, then wash over the second plan entirely, which includes the buildings, trees, ground, &c. on the mass between the foreground and distance. With a tint of gray, composed of ochre, indigo, and lake,  mark the breakings of the buildings, the shades, and the trees, leaving the tops, which receive the light; repeat where a deeper tone is required until all the parts have their due force. Then with a tint of purple composed of indigo and lake  pass over the mass forming the distance, bringing it over the ground and trees upon the second plan, this should be done with care, lest, by passing the pencil, too frequently, over tints which have been previously laid, it should cause them to rise and mix with the tint in use: the pencil therefore should not be too full of colour, and being drawn over the mass, part at a time, without retouching where the

tint is wet, the tone will be given without doing injury: the distant mass may be retouched giving depth to the parts opposed to the lights. With a tint of ochre and gamboge,  pass over the whole of the foreground, retouching as the sketching may indicate. Then with a tint of green, composed of indigo, ochre, and gamboge,  touch in the tops of the trees where the gray tint had been omitted, and on the ground agreeably with the sketching, next with a tint of red, composed of ochre and gamboge,  touch in the parts of the building, where a rawness prevails, or, as it may be termed, warm the lights of the mass, on the trees, or on the ground, as it may require; the touching with this colour should be cut to the shape of the part with exactness: clearness will be lost by any other method. The water may be done with the tints of the objects

reflected. The foreground will require a few stains to determine the grass, the road, &c. and may be enriched as fancy directs, observing not to use tints that would destroy the mass of light.

To harmonize the whole should now become the study of the learner. In reviewing the subject bear in mind that lights, must be warmer than shades, and retouch accordingly. A tint of indigo will reduce a warmth too violent, and a tint of ochre will impart warmth to a tone too cold.

An Elevated Foreground.

In painting this subject, the objects require on the foreground to be marked with decision, yet so as to form a breadth of light



View of the Lake of Geneva, by J. C. G. & Co. and J. H. Hill, London

opposed to the aërial tints of the distance, the extreme part of which seems to melt into the atmosphere, the hills nearer have less and less of the aërial tone, as they approach, until broken by the chalk hill, which, giving the idea of an extensive vale, breaks the communication. The clouds should be indicated faintly with sepia, the sky a tint of indigo, softened off, a tint of lake and gamboge over the whole of the sky and distance. The clouds retouched with ochre. Pass over all the hills a weak tint of prussian blue. Then leaving the most distant pass over the remaining hills with indigo and lake, then leaving the hills next in distance to the one before left, add a little gamboge to the tint and pass over the remaining distance preserving the foreground clean.

The small objects on the plain, such as masses of trees, &c. are touched with indigo, lake, and sepia, in one strong tint, retouching as the advancing indicates ; afterwards touch the hill with sepia, indigo, and gamboge, and stain the distance with weak tints of lake and of indigo, as it shall seem to require.

Sea View.

For the perspective refer to the small subject. In this subject the shape of the clouds is formed by the blue tint of the sky, as taste, or rather observations from nature may direct, the edge nearest the warmth softened off. Give depth of tone to the clouds by repeating with gray tints. The building and the water in front, form one mass relieved by the stream of light across the middle of the subject.



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Attention should be given to the touches which determine the hollow of the waves, also that they be no stronger than just to determine them; lest hardness be produced. The distance is kept tender in gray tones, the lights touched to agree with their situation respecting the breadth.

Ruin.

The sky as in the foregoing subject, afterwards pass a gray tint over the whole, repeating where greater strength is required. The masses are strong, and laid with a pencil rather bare of colour, by which means a number of sparkling lights are left, which being afterwards toned down with appropriate tints produce a pleasing effect, and characterise the ruin. The light issuing through the opening

may be sponged out, and restored afterwards with the gray tints, or may be blended in as the tints are laid. The colours are powerful but few, relieved by foliage and greenish stains, or rendered deeper by touches of sepia and indigo.

Cottage.

This subject will require more drawing than the preceding, the objects being more complicated. It is presumed the learner will attend minutely to the outline, referring to the perspective plate to determine the building.

The sky has a tint of indigo, rendered deeper with washes of gray, the clouds with gray. Mark the opposing masses of trees, &c.



strongly, with a tint of sepia and indigo, the distant trees have a tint of gray, their lights heightened with gamboge and ochre, and their shades rendered deeper with indigo. The extremities of the trees are to be laid thin, or with a pencil having little colour in it, to prevent their having a heavy or lumpy appearance. In such scenes there is great variety of forms, character, and tone, they all require attention. To obtain breadth destroy the straggling or offensive lights with grays, if in the shade, or with ochre if in the light, harmonize by breaking the keenness of the cold tints without affecting the aërial tone. If a clearer light be required on a mass of colour, a pencil with clean water may be passed on the part, or touched as best suited, letting the water remain until it begins to dry, then dab a linen cloth on it, to absorb what may remain ; and immediately rub

up the colour with a bit of bread ; such parts may be again retouched until the desired tone be produced. Any degree of force may be obtained by adding sepia and lake to the warm tones, or sepia with indigo to the cold.

It will be observed, the subjects have encreased progressively in force of colour and in intricacy, and it is hoped that the learner has studied all the particulars as they have proceeded, for by perseverance alone can they be rendered familiar. “ Nothing is denied to well directed labour : nothing is to be obtained without it.”

F I N I S.

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